

funding for the Kosovo Protection Corps, the KPC. I am strongly opposed to that amendment because it would have the opposite intended effect of the author's stated goals and, in fact, contribute to greater instability and to increased human rights abuses in Kosovo, thereby complicating the mission of our and other NATO peace-keeping troops.

Strongly supported by the United States, the KPC was formed by the U.N. Administration in Kosovo, the UNMIK. Under this crucial program, the Kosovo Liberation Army was demilitarized and its former members encouraged to become part of an emergency assistance and community service.

Reports of individual members of the KPC, or individuals posing as KPC members, committing human rights abuses are disturbing and must be continued to be fully investigated and monitored. Any KPC member found to have been associated with such activities will be immediately dismissed and subject to criminal prosecution.

I do agree with KFOR and U.N. officials that there must be a zero tolerance policy towards offenses committed by those few members of the KPC or any other individuals in Kosovo who commit criminal offenses or abuse their position in the KPC. That is why we support the approach of focusing the relatively small amount of United States assistance to Kosovo on judicial and police assistance in order to increase stability in this region that has been torn apart by a decade long conflict.

Denying United States funding for the KPC would not resolve the problems that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) believes exists in Kosovo and would more than likely increase those difficulties. It would have us throw the baby out with the bath water by undercutting a good program because a few bad individuals may have been involved. We do not stop paying for our police when we find a bad cop in that force.

Cutting off our assistance to the KPC would jeopardize the accomplishments of disarming former combatants and moving Kosovo along the path of peace and reconciliation and would undermine our ability to influence the development of the KPC. It would increase the risk to our troops currently positioned in Kosovo and would threaten to extend the time they need to be deployed there, something we do not want to see happen.

Accordingly, I urge our colleagues to reject this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) for yielding to me, and I certainly strongly support his statement.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it is imperative that we oppose this amendment. I

believe that this amendment really would wreak havoc in the region. The State Department, the administration, all people who have dealt with this situation in Kosovo oppose this.

The Kosovo Protection Corps plays a critical role in Kosovo in many ways. After the Kosovo Liberation Army formerly gave up its weapons, the KPC was created as an organization which absorbed former KLA members into a demilitarized structure. The State Department has described the KPC as the most important element of a broad program to provide employment for KLA veterans.

The KPC also carries out critical civilian works projects. NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson has praised the KPC for its work throughout Kosovo, which has included repairing roads, bridges, and other reconstruction projects.

Let me read his quote. He says, "I will continue to support the KPC, to demand from the international community the resources that will allow it to do this valuable civil job to support General Ceku in the role he has of being an influential spokesman for peace and reconciliation." This is the NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson.

The Kucinich amendment is based on a supposed unreleased internal United Nations report of February 29, 2000, which allegedly makes a variety of accusations against the KPC. When my staff requested a copy of this report, none was available because it was never released. We believe that it is difficult to respond anyway to this report, not only because Members cannot review it for themselves, but because the first KPC members were inaugurated only 1 month before the report was supposedly written.

On April 22 of this year, 114 KPC officers and personnel joined 230 local workers and youth groups in cleaning up disease-infested garbage mounds throughout Pristina, the capital. In another instance, the KPC intervened on February 4 when French and NATO peacekeepers were not able to disperse an angry crowd. According to Reuters, "The situation finally calmed down with the arrival of the KPC."

Let me read one other quote, and this is a quote from General Klaus Reinhardt, commander of Allied Forces in Kosovo, KFOR. He says, "It is my firm belief that the formation of the KPC is an essential step to restoring normalcy to this region."

So this is an irresponsible amendment. It should be resoundingly defeated.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) has 15 seconds remaining.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I request that the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) ask unanimous consent so that I could have a whole minute, which would be 45 seconds on each side.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that each side be given an additional 45 seconds.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, I object.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York very much for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, I would just say there are no white hats in this operation, and there are neither on the Albanian side nor on the Serb side when one considers what happens in Kosovska Mitrovica. It is not easy to turn organizations which have grown up in war into democratic organization in the pursuit of multiethnic community. But if Kosovo is ever to be a multiethnic and a multireligious community, then we are going to have to work with these organizations.

I very much oppose that we adopt the amendment.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The unreleased internal United Nations report on the Kosovo Protection Corps using violence, extortion, murder, and torture has been widely reported. I am asking all of my colleagues today to take a stand for the protection of human rights of all citizens in Kosovo. Vote "yes" on this amendment.

The KPC has become a brutal paramilitary organization, a fact that has been confirmed by the U.N. itself, the GAO, and many nongovernmental organizations. According to this internal U.N. report, the KPC has prevented the U.N. from establishing peace and maintaining order in Kosovo. The United States cannot continue to fund such activities.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Kucinich Amendment, which would seriously undermine our efforts to promote stability and reconstruction in Kosova.

This amendment seeks to cut off all funding for the Kosova Protection Corps, a civilian organization formed in September of last year to employ demobilized members of Kosova Liberation Army on needed efforts such as disaster response, search and rescue, humanitarian assistance to isolated areas, de-mining and rebuilding the country's infrastructure. The KPC, which operates under the authority of the UN, offers employments to these veterans to engage in constructive activities in support of the country and its people.

I understand and share the gentleman's concerns over allegations of acts of violence committed by purported members of this organization. These incidents should be investigated fully and those found guilty should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. But to completely cut off funding to an organization that, in the words of the KFOR commander, General Klaus Reinhardt, is "an essential step to restoring normalcy to this region", would undercut and negate everything that this country and our European allies have done to restore peace and stability to Kosova.